# Montana Alfalfa Seed Advisory Committee

# Meeting Minutes

Tuesday February 18th, 2020, Billings Hotel and Convention Center

1. Call to order

John Mehling, Chair of the Alfalfa Seed Advisory Committee called the meeting to order at 1:08pm

1. Roll call and Introductions

Introductions were made around the room and John Mehling completed Roll Call

Present:

John Mehling, Chair- Hardin MT

Tom Niebur- Malta MT

Cavin Steiger- Forsyth MT

Dallas Steiger- Hysham MT

Ernest Johnson- Chinook MT

Tom Matchett- Billings MT

Justin Wiese- Malta MT

Ben Thomas- Director, Department of Agriculture

Andy Fjeseth- Bureau Chief ADD, Department of Agriculture

Ian Foley- Department of Agriculture

Alyssa Piccolomini- Department of Agriculture

Dani Jones- Department of Agriculture

Eric Sommer- NASS Helena MT

1. Approval of Past Minutes and the Agenda

The committee reviewed the meeting minutes from the February 12th, 2019 meeting. Cavin Steiger made the motion to approve the minutes as presented, motion was 2nd by Tom Niebur. All in favor, motion passed

The committee added to the agenda, under New Business- NAFA Membership. After the addition to the agenda Cavin Steiger made the motion to accept the agenda as presented with the addition, Tom Niebur 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed

1. Staff Updates
   1. Alyssa Piccolomini gave an update to the committee concerning the lab and x-ray. 29 total samples in 2019. Machine is still working; Alyssa has looked for options in case the machine does go down.
2. Financial Update
   1. Andy Fjeseth went over the Financial Report as provided from the accounting department. John Mehling suggested that the projected assessment amount for FY2020 should be closer to $15,000. The rest of the committee agreed. Ernest Johnson made a motion to accept the budget as presented with the change to the FY2020 Assessment amount, Dallas Steiger 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed
3. Old Business
   1. 2019 ALCB Amendment- Dani Jones explained to the committee that the amendment includes a date change for the 2019 Alfalfa Leaf Cutter Bee RFP. Alyssa Piccolomini reassured the committee that the amendment was due to funding being left over. Ernest Johnson made the motion to accept the amendment for the 2019 ALCB RFP, Tom Matchett 2nd the motion
4. New Business
   1. Hemp Update- Andy Fjeseth and Ben Thomas gave an update to the committee concerning the future of the Hemp industry, processor update, and checkoff.
   2. NAFA Membership- Cavin Steiger made the motion to pay the membership dues, not to exceed $6,000, Justin Wiese 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed. Dani Jones will look into the membership invoices and payments
5. Submitted 2020 Alfalfa RFP’s
   1. Montana Ag in the Classroom, requested amount $1,500
      1. Cavin Steiger made the motion to fund Ag in the Classroom at the full amount, $1,500, Ernest Johnson 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed
   2. NASS, requested amount $5,000
      1. It was discussed that district information would be better for the Alfalfa report, Cavin Steiger suggested a letter to be completed in support and sent to Eric and NASS. Ernest Johnson made the motion to fund NASS at the requested $5,000, Cavin Steiger 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed
   3. P2P Mobile Device, requested amount $5,000,000
      1. The committee discussed the submitted RFP, Dallas Steiger made a motion to fund the project, NO 2nd was made. Motion failed. Dani Jones will complete a letter to direct the applicant to other funding sources.
6. Committee Terms
   1. Terms expiring 12-1-2020- Cavin Steiger, Ernest Johnson, and John Mehling- Dani Jones will send the committee members applications to be completed and sent back
7. Assessment Review
   1. Current Assessment rate “half of 1%”, Ernest Johnson made the motion to leave the assessment rate at the current amount of half of 1%, Tom Niebur 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed
8. Staff Update
   1. Ben Thomas gave an update to the committee including the Student Loan Assistant Program and the upcoming 2021 Legislation Session.
   2. Alyssa Piccolomini reminded the committee if they wanted to make rule changes, like Melittiba- quarantine information to go out to other bee owners in the area; it can be done
9. 2021 Western Alfalfa, Las Vegas
   1. Cavin Steiger made the motion to fund travel to Las Vegas for the 2021 Western Alfalfa not to exceed $1,000, Dallas Steiger 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed. Dani Jones reminded the member that will be traveling that the Out of State Travel Requested needs to be completed prior to travel.
10. Adjourn
    1. Tom Niebur made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:35pm, Cavin Steiger 2nd the motion. All in favor, motion passed